Council: Poland

The Pirate Academy was made possible by the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament.

Confidential: for the assigned participant only. Do not share with other participants, including other Council members. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions.

The Council in this scenario. Up to nine member states sit in the Council: Germany, France, Poland, Italy, Hungary, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Spain and Austria (the facilitator will say which are present tonight). Each state has one vote, cast by its representative. Decisions on whether a candidate's process advances are taken by **unanimity:** every state has to agree, and a state that blocks says so on the record in one sentence. The **funds package** is different: it is adopted by **qualified majority** (the facilitator will state tonight's number), voted as a whole, and cannot be amended from the floor. It is voted before the candidates answer the Commission, and before your votes on each candidate. Candidates may promise more reform than they can carry, at a risk to their own governments: a promise made to win your vote may not survive the year. Each decision on a candidate can also carry a **note:** one sentence, proposed by any member state before the vote and entered unless another member state objects. Conditions, reassurances and face-saving formulas are written there. The Czech Presidency chairs and does not vote. The Commission proposes and does not vote here. The candidate countries have no vote at all, which does not mean they have no leverage: they are the only actors who can commit to reform, and they can refuse. Side agreements between any parties are allowed, should be written down with the clear support of everyone in them, and are published only after the scenario.

Your delegation: Poland (solo)

For Poland the enlargement of the Union eastwards is not a policy but a security project. Your government reads the war in Ukraine as proof that a wider Union is a stronger one, and it has spent the year leading European support for Kyiv, at a cost it intends everyone to remember. You want commitments tonight that are concrete enough to be quoted: a date, an opened negotiation, money that moves.

Your relationship with the Western Balkans is thinner. The exception is Serbia, whose refusal to align with sanctions on Russia you regard as a live problem rather than a regional peculiarity.

Decision rule: you cast Poland's vote in the Council.

Your role

Motivations and constraints: Your aims: get Ukraine and Moldova advanced with dates rather than adjectives; get the bulk of the money moving east, where there is a war and an energy blockade; prevent a Serbia that is aligned with Moscow from being advanced as though nothing were happening; and counterbalance the caution coming from Paris and The Hague, which you regard as comfortable rather than principled. You need two things you cannot get alone: unanimity for Ukraine's advancement, which means persuading every sceptic in the room, and a qualified majority for a package weighted eastwards.

Red lines: No suggestion that standards should delay Ukraine while its cities are being struck. No package that funds the Western Balkans generously and leaves Moldova cold. No conditionality written as though wartime constraints were a failure of political will.

Style: Direct and morally serious. Your strongest line is the simplest one: people are dying for the thing this room is debating. Deploy it deliberately rather than constantly. In bilateral meetings you are more effective than in plenary, because your public register makes cautious states defensive and they then need a way to move without appearing to give in.

Confidential (for you alone): Your government needs Ukraine's advancement tonight for reasons that are domestic as well as strategic, and you are authorised to pay for it: on the Balkan track, on the money, on almost anything except a formal delay to Kyiv. That makes you the most purchasable state in the room on every file except Ukraine, and you should hide it. You also know that attacking Hungary directly is a trap. A public confrontation with Budapest over its position on Russia would isolate Poland at least as much as Hungary, and your government's own difficulties with the Commission over the rule of law make you an uncomfortable advocate on that subject. Let the Netherlands, the Commission and the Parliament carry the conditionality argument; work on Hungary privately, where you have more in common with them than you would like the room to notice, and where a deal on Serbia may be available.